

Mitchell Park Dog Run



City of Tempe Community Services

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Tempe, AZ 85282

Call 350-5200

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HISTORY

The City of Tempe was experiencing a number of problems with dogs at Mitchell Park. Tempe has a leash law requiring dog owners to keep their animals on leash at all times. However, problems were created by people bringing their dogs to the park and allowing them to run off leash, chase frisbees, etc.. This intimidated the park users, resulted in complaints about safety risks and created confrontations between park users and dog owners. Leash law citations were issued to several dog owners, but it was not possible to have Police and/or Animal Control watch this or any other park all day, every day.

In January, 1994 staff in association with the Mitchell Neighborhood Association recommended the construction of a 120' x 220' "Dog Run" in the southeast corner of the park. This type of facility was in use by other cities throughout the country with much success. Dog owners would be allowed to let their dogs run off leash within this enclosure. The City would provide fencing, lighting, seating, water and waste disposal facilities. There was some initial concern about liability exposure, but the City Attorney's office reviewed and supported the concept.

Tempe City Council approved the "Dog Run" on a six month trial basis. The facility was constructed with minimal cost and labor by Parks Maintenance Staff. Fencing already existed on two sides (Mitchell was an elementary school purchased by the City), and remaining two sides were constructed with 6' used surplus fencing from other facilities. A park water fountain was adapted for use by animals. A plastic bag dispenser and waste receptacle were installed. Surplus seating, tables and lighting from other facilities were installed in the facility.

The "Dog Run" became a permanent facility after its initial trial period. The only problems have been: 1. Turf Damage due to heavy use; and 2. Noise Complaints from a homeowner adjacent to the facility.

